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## BARTLETT'S MUCH-TALKED-OF LAFAYETTE STATUE

There is a grave international scandal hanging over France and the United States. We may call it, for convenience' sake, the scandal of the statue, the reference being to the statue of Lafayette, which the school children of the United States are supposed to have presented to France. Every year since the present plaster cast was erected there have been grumblings and murmurings and curious questions asked about the statue. Americans living in Paris have grown uneasy, and feel that disgrace has been put upon them by their own people. Americans visiting Paris are disappointed at not seeing the great bronze equestrian statue of Lafayette, for which the school children of the United States have paid.

Matters have been made worse by the fact that the old plaster cast which does duty for a statue is now in a dilapidated condition. Some two years ago a hoof fell off the horse and a boot off the hero. Paul Wayland Bartlett, the sculptor, patched the parts together and did the whole over with bronze paint. The patched and painted horse and man deceived the eye for about eighteen months. Now the thing is once more weather worn. The horse's neck is arched wrongly, his tail is superlatively twisted, and big white spots appear on his shoulders and sides as the paint falls off. Furthermore, the young general looks knee-knocked. Under these circumstances it is not wonderful that people ask why the committee does not report. Why is the statue not erected? Who has the money?

J. J. CONWAY. (Courtesy of Curtis Brown.)



## ANOTHER LAY-OBJECTOR IN ART MATTERS

A few months ago the public was amused at the dispute between Dr. Huntington and Gutzon Borglum over the sex of angels — a dispute that resulted in hammering two inoffensive creations into fragments. Now comes another contention — likewise inspired by the church — as regards the propriety of putting Miss Violet Oakley's paintings on the walls of the new state-house at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Are art and the church at outs?

The Federation of Catholic Societies of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Chapter, Knights of Columbus last January united in a protest against Miss Oakley's pictures being placed in the new capitol, insisting that they violate the truth of history, are improper for the decoration of a public building of the State, and should not be placed in the capitol. The new Capitol Commission is acquitted of any intention to wound the sensibilities of Catholics, yet these bodies think that the Commission, architect,

and artist should be held to accountability for persisting in a mistaken course after their attention has been called to the errors it is alleged the pictures will perpetuate.

The six of the thirteen pictures that Miss Oakley is to paint for the new capitol represent William Tyndale printing the translation of the Bible into English and smuggling the New Testament into England; William Penn, student at Christ college, Oxford; attempt to stop the new learning; burning of the Books at Oxford and Martyrdom of William Tyndale; rise of the Puritan Idea; George Fox on the Mount of Vision; answer to Tyndale's Prayer and Martyrdom of Anne Askew. In his recently published article Father Ganss says:

"Without discussing the artistic merits of the paintings or challenging the motives of their inspiration; without impugning the good faith of the Capitol Building Commission, or attributing to it other than honest designs; without presuming to formulate new art canons or intrude on the architect's matured plans, it is respectfully submitted that the three double panels not only sin against good taste and propriety, but are indirect violation of historical truth; that they will kindle the very religious animosity whose evils they pretend to portray, and give official sanction to an affront offered to the largest church body in the State. In other words, it places counterfeit historical data in circulation, and in this case all the more dangerous and pernicious, since civil authority in a way constitutes itself an official clearing-house."

In closing his pamphlet, which, by the way, was widely distributed in the churches of the Harrisburg Roman Catholic diocese, Father Ganss says: "The flattering unction is not for a moment taken to heart that these articles, which it is confessed are in the nature of a remonstrance, will perceptibly influence the predetermined conclusions of the Capitol Building Commission, the supervising architect and the selected artist, much less that the cartoons will be rejected, even undergo modification. We can only reiterate with additional stress and renewed emphasis: Should these designs be accepted and carried out, it will be a flagrant violation of all historical evidence, a wanton insult to the largest religious body in the State, a repristination of sectarian intolerance, and an official sanction of monstrous falsehood. Hysteria may pass as history; fiction may parade as fact; partyism may masquerade as patriotism; but a day of historical accounting and retribution will follow with unfailing speed and remorseless certainty. The nineteenth century history of the Church of God is strewn with the wrecks and ruins of routed enemies, blasted calumnies, stricken falsehoods. She does not shrink or wince under the most searching historical scrutiny, for she realizes, in the words of that sagacious master of statecraft, Alexander de Tocqueville, that precisely 'the restoration of the science of history is the restoration of Catholic greatness.'"

It is said that a strong remonstrance will be presented to the new Capitol Commission against the pictures at its next meeting. EXCHANGE.